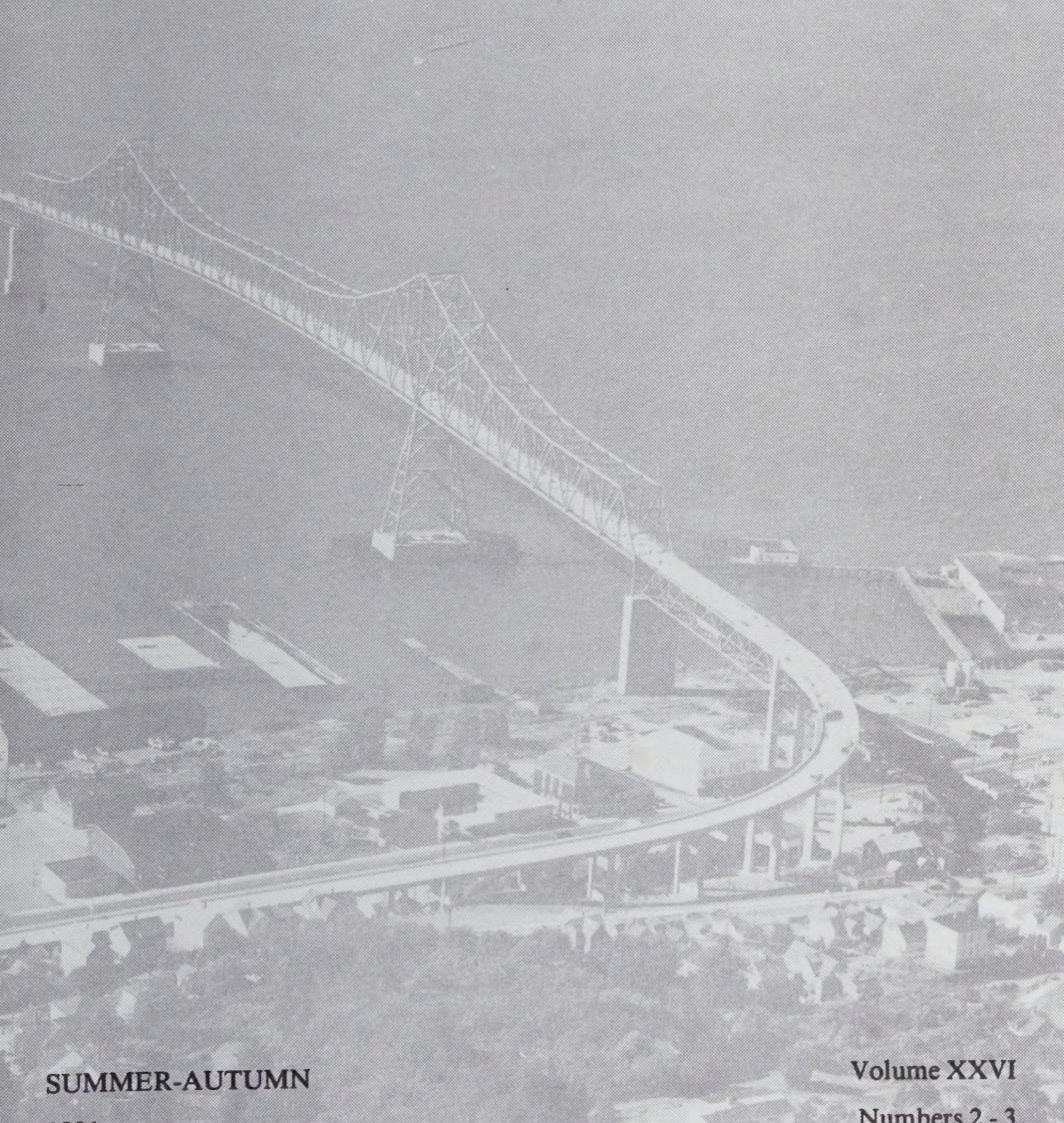


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# ❧ The Sou'wester ❧

SINCE 1966

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# **The Sou'wester**

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Ruth McCausland - Joan G. Mann  
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## Our Cover

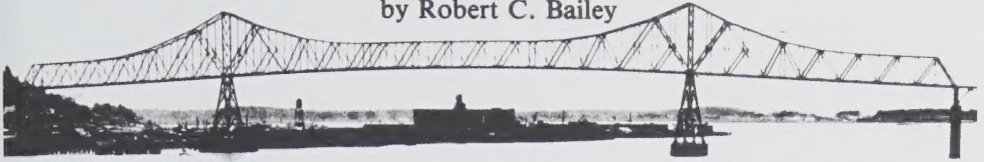
A panoramic view of the Astoria-Megler Bridge from the Oregon side taken in 1966, showing the artfully engineered approach rising from ground level in Astoria's Uniontown district to overarch the shipping canal in a relatively short distance. Desdemona Sands are barely visible at mid-river, and the coastal hills of Washington form a background to Megler on the northern shore of the Columbia. Oregon State Highways photo, courtesy of Robert C. Bailey.

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# The Astoria-Megler Bridge ... *A Dream Come True*

by Robert C. Bailey



(Ed. note: Former State Senator Robert C. Bailey was one of Washington State's most dedicated advocates for a bridge across the Columbia at Megler. He records here the intricate process both states went through to obtain it. Senator Sid Snyder says: "without Bob Bailey, we wouldn't have a bridge".

August 27, 1991, marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the dedication of the Astoria-Megler bridge, an event sought for by many over a period of sixty years or more.

The twenty-fifth anniversary also marked a time when bridge supporters could turn to the nay-sayers and the professional study firms and say, "I told you so." Everyone had made dire predictions about the future of the bridge and deemed it unfeasible financially. On its twenty-fifth birthday the bridge was doing nicely.

While the opening in 1966 was a momentous occasion and marked the start of a new era for the two-state area of the Lower Columbia, it also marked the end of a long campaign of very few victories and many disappointments, as well as outright opposition for the many who looked forward to the day that bridging the river at its mouth would become a reality.

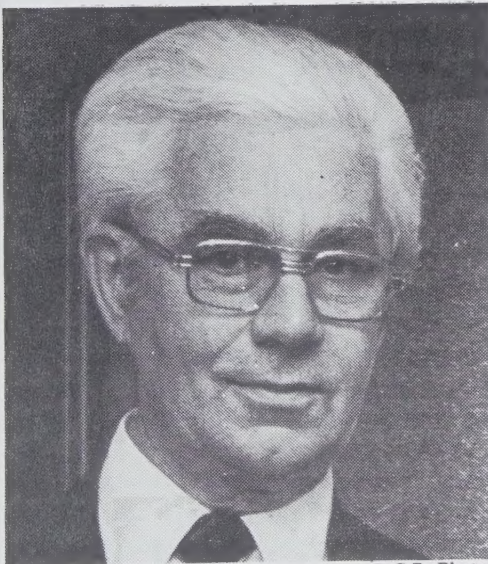
Verna Jacobson, veteran county auditor, assembled a great deal of information relating to Pacific County's participation in support of the bridge. These, consisting of letters, clippings, contracts and other items, were given by Verna to the Washington Room at the state library.

Most of the items and activities prior to 1953 come from Verna's collection; those from that date forward when the final drive for the bridge began, come from my own extensive collection assembled from legislative and other records. The

Washington State Transportation Commission has been very helpful in furnishing facts and figures on finances.

Clippings from local newspapers, particularly the **Ilwaco Tribune** and **Chinook Observer**, as well as the **Astorian-Budget**, follow the construction of the bridge in great detail and are indispensable.

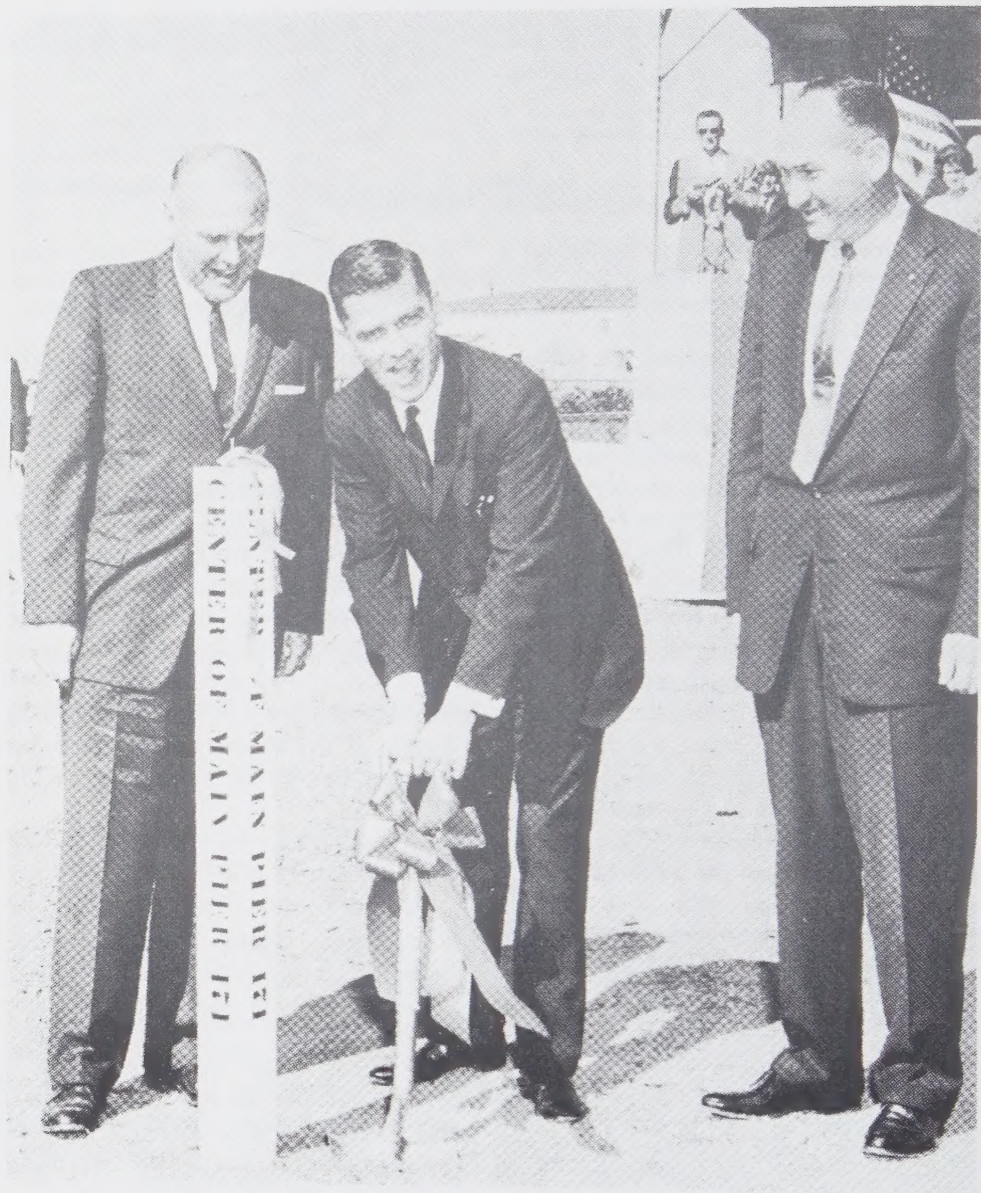
So many people have been involved in working for a bridge that it is inevitable that many names will be overlooked in the course of putting a story together, but named or not, the successful conclusion of the bridge effort has to be credited to **EVERYONE**. Their unswerving support over the many years brought about the happy ending in 1966.



R.C.B. Photo

State Senator Robert C. Bailey, c. 1976





Oregon State Highway photo, courtesy Robert C. Bailey

Governor Hatfield flanked by State Representative William H. Holmstrom and State Senator Daniel A. Thiel.

## Ground Breaking Ceremony, August 9, 1962



## *Early Times*

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After World War I, the appearance of the automobile in mass numbers created a demand for more and more public roads. The demands permeated local and state activities of the 1920s and newspaper accounts of that time are full of stories of delegations and petitions to county and state governments demanding more and better roadways.

Roadways between towns in upper Pacific County and on the Long Beach Peninsula were short and the demands were for connecting those.

This automotive activity brought about the demise of the "old" methods of transportation in Pacific County. It saw curtailment and the end of steamer traffic on Willapa Bay which had carried people from Willapa City to Raymond, South Bend, Bay Center, Tokeland and the Peninsula. Motor buses soon took over.

There is no doubt that the automobile spelled the doom of the narrow gauge "Clam Shell" railway which ran from Megler up the Peninsula and served the area for many years. In its latter days, the railroad was increasingly used to haul cars from the ferry to places up the Peninsula where their owners could drive them about on the limited roads.

The old railroad bed and tunnel under Fort Columbia would soon become the roadbed for the first highways in that area.

It was probably gradual, but ultimately the people-passenger service which originally brought visitors to the Peninsula via the railroad in summers and on weekends, evolved into an automobile ferry, ultimately the type not far removed from that which served Astoria-Megler prior to the construction of the bridge.

It is not hard to imagine that a bridge across the Columbia must have entered many minds as motorists sat in long lines, missed ferries, had long waits and sometimes had to await calmer waters so the ferries could resume. They must have thought of a bridge even though a far-fetched idea at that time.

Bridging the Lower Columbia did not come early since the heavier traffic demands and population factors favored Vancouver on the I-5 corridor. After the bridge at Vancouver, a private firm built the bridge at Longview, later got into financial trouble and was taken over by the State of Washington. Ironically, this action would be cited later in Astoria bridge connections when it was said to serve as a precedent when Washington negotiators suggested Oregon take over construction of the bridge at Astoria.

Early support for the bridge at Astoria came largely from the neighboring governmental agencies--Pacific County on the north, Clatsop County and the city of Astoria on the south. The Oregon highways department seems to have become a more active participant about 1946 when it had to take over operation of the Astoria-Megler ferry from private owners.

It is said that Doc Steinman of the engineering firm of Robinson and Steinman, New York, picked the Astoria-Megler bridge site in 1928 or 1929.

In 1933, with the advent of the New Deal and public works projects to put the unemployed back to work, a group called the Oregon-Washington Bridge Trustees was organized. It was made up of Pacific County, Clatsop County and the city of Astoria. Its aim was to organize a feasible project and try to get it accepted as a public works project.





Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil

Bob Bailey (r) & Sid Snyder, Secretary of the Washington State Senate, with Sid's daughter, Senate page Karen Snyder, in 1971.



The firm of Robinson and Steinman, engineers, New York, was hired to draw up plans and make application to the Public Works division of the National Recovery Administration.

Pacific County commissioners joined in the endeavor and when the application was filed, passed resolutions of support.

The application to General Hugh S. Johnson, head of the NRA, asked the federal emergency administrator of the Public Works Administration for a total of \$5,500,000 to build the bridge and "put people to work." Of this total, \$3,850,000 would be a loan and \$1,650,000 a grant. It was estimated the tolls would pay off the loan in thirteen years.

Action was not taken at once as the PWA decided to ask each governor in the nation to list the projects they desired in their own states in order of the priority they placed upon them.

In 1934, Pacific County and others of the O-W Bridge trustees, wrote the governors of their respective states asking that they advise, promptly, as to the order of priority each gave to the Astoria-Megler project.

According to Dick Bettendorf, manager of the Port of Astoria, in a summary written many years later, "These applications were defeated by strong opposition by selfish interests upriver, and under strong political pressure, the Department of Interior denied the grant on the grounds that the project would not be self-liquidating."

During 1934, Congress considered and passed a bill authorizing construction of a bridge over the Columbia at Astoria. Pacific County commissioners L.D. Williams and Otto Roessler sent their colleague, Commissioner V.M. Bullard, to Washington, D.C., in a delegation to present plans for the bridge.

The authorization by Congress was for a limited time and at various times in the ensuing years it would necessarily be renewed by congressional action. In 1941, many eyebrows were raised when an amendment was placed on the bill also authorizing construction at Tongue Point, upriver.

Since no change was made in the Astoria authorization only a little comment was heard, but in 1946 when the authorization was again up for extension a loud cry went up from Astoria that "Astoria is the only site."

These congressional renewals had the effect of raising false hopes each time they arose and were reported in the press. A renewal in 1945 had headlines, "President Truman Signs Astoria Bridge Bill." Another in 1946 said that Congress had passed its tenth OK of a Lower Columbia bridge.

The continued extensions seemed to refuel hopes and keep the project alive, at least in the minds of people. The stories gave a lot of publicity to area congressmen and would spark glowing press releases of support. They didn't build much bridge.

## *The Forties*

---

Except for the several extensions of the authorization by Congress, the forties were occupied largely by war activities and the times did not warrant much talk of projects of this type. It was not a good time for construction even though many felt that the bridge could contribute mightily to the war effort. This need was alleviated, however, by use of the bridges at Longview and even Vancouver.

In April, 1946, the Oregon State Highways Commission came onto the scene as an active player. The privately-owned Astoria-Megler ferry system was in deep financial trouble and threatening to close down operations. The only logical solution was for the Oregon highways department to take the ferries over if the service was to be maintained at all. They were to become Oregon's highway navy.

Entering into a pact with the Oregon department were the city of Astoria, Clatsop County and Pacific County.

In an agreement signed by all parties, Pacific County made available a \$15,000 piece of property at Point Ellice for use by Oregon as a ferry terminal and landing site. It was their part of keeping the ferries running.

Later, in 1952, the Washington state auditor criticized Pacific County for the way it carried the ferry landing property on its books. Pacific County and Oregon skirmished -- on paper. Pacific County accused Oregon of not giving it an annual accounting from 1946 to 1952. Oregon responded by saying that the agreement signed said that anything over operating expenses and amortization should be returned to Pacific County, and since the ferries had operated at a deficit since 1946, there was nothing to report. Ultimately, the auditor, the county and Oregon reached agreement.

In a statement of that time, Pacific County commissioners said that even though they had problems with Oregon and the auditor, they did not regret the 1946 agreement because at that time the ferries were in danger of quitting business and that they were glad to have cooperated with Oregon.

### *New Pressures - New Crises* \_\_\_\_\_

The financial difficulties of the ferries and their ever-increasing deficit did much to push the Oregon Highways Commission into a major role as far as the bridge was concerned. The ferry system needed general overhauling both in its terminals and in its fleet. It was getting costly.

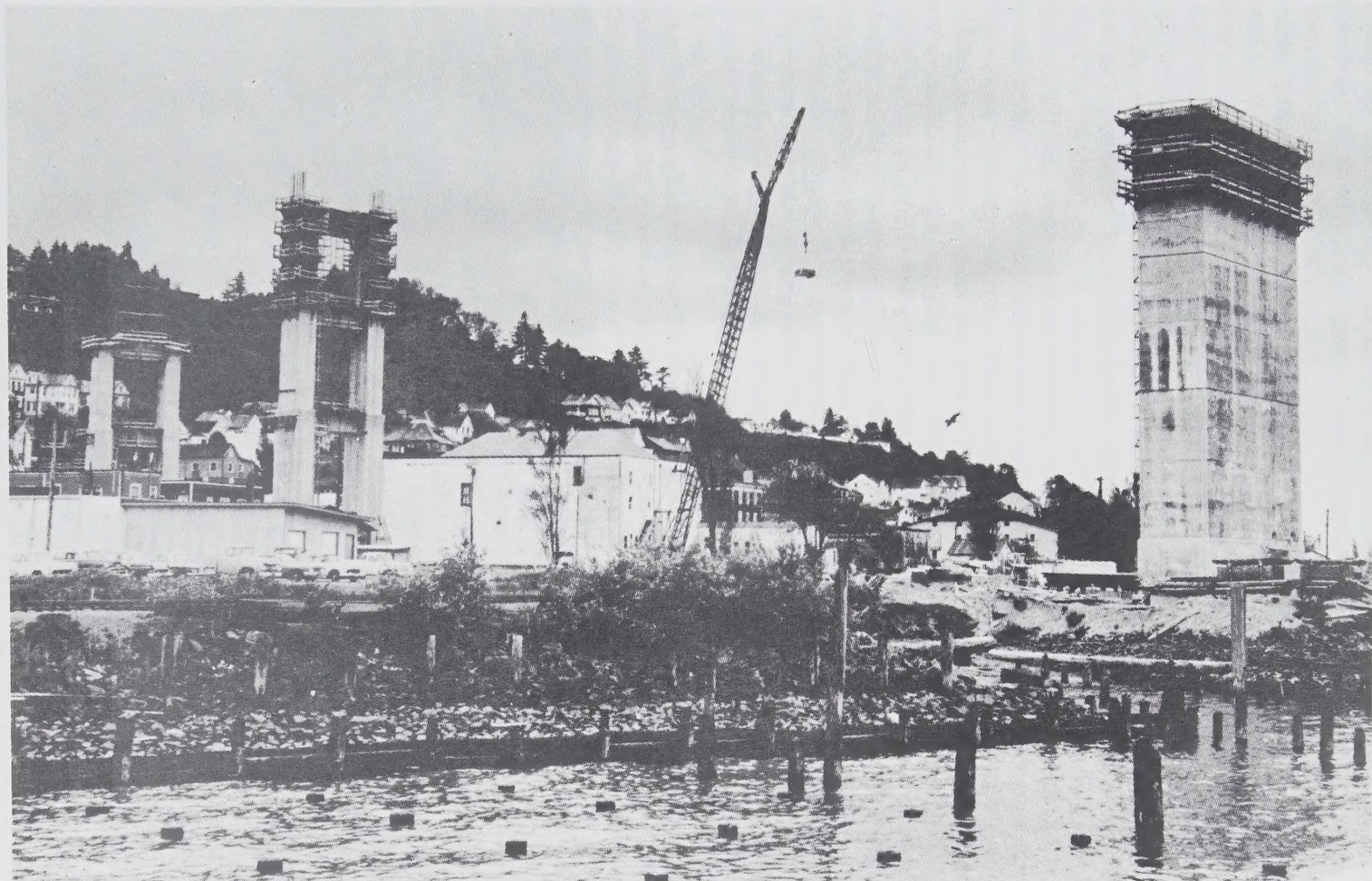
To add to this, post-war traffic had increased tremendously and the ferries were pushed to their limits on busy weekends, low clam tides and just because of the large number of motorists choosing to go up the coastal route. Like it or not, the Oregon Highway Department almost had to be interested in the alternative--like a bridge?

In a similar way, adding to the pressure, was the completion of the bridges across the several bays in Oregon, thus completing Oregon's part of the coastal highway. The Oregon Coast Association was busy promoting tourist travel but was frustrated when the tourist got to Astoria and a goodly portion headed straight up the river to the nearest bridge rather than await a ferry.

Moreover, a large number of tourists, knowing of this water barrier, would turn northeastward from the coastal highway many miles down the coast, and head for the bridge crossings. This was bad business, especially for Astoria, which like most towns, was trying to recover from its wartime waterfront activity and tourism seemed to be the great white hope.

Pacific County never waived in its support of the bridge over the years, but lacking a concentrated population center on the north side and not being a heavily populated county either, it was not geared for some of the promotional activities and leadership needed to make the bridge become a reality. Oregon had to be the prime mover.





Land piers of the Astoria-Megler Bridge on the Oregon side.

Oregon State Highways photo courtesy Robert Bailey



With the advent of the state of Oregon as an active participant in discussions, it was natural that its counterpart -- in this case the Washington Toll Bridge Authority --also became an active player.

With all these new pressures demanding attention, a new governmental agency entered and sought to organize all of the units together as a powerful force to do something about the bridge. That entity was the Port of Astoria.

About 1953, the Port assumed the bridge project as one of its main objectives. R.J. (Dick) Bettendorf, first as assistant manager and later as manager of the Port, spearheaded the port-sponsored drive which led to the final assault which would win the battle. He was ably assisted by Charles DeFoe, manager of the Astoria Chamber of Commerce.

Late in 1953, the Port of Astoria put together a program for a \$50,000 study of the engineering and financial feasibility of a bridge from Astoria to Megler. Pacific County, the Washington Toll Bridge Authority, the Oregon Highways Commission, and the Port of Astoria each paid \$12,500. The Port was named the sponsoring agency.

The contract was let to A.C. Allyn and Co., of Chicago. They would finance the bridge if found financially feasible. They hired Tudor and Company of San Francisco to determine the engineering feasibility, cost of construction, and cost of maintenance and operation of the bridge. Tudor hired the firm of Coverdale and Colpitts to study and report on estimated traffic and potential earnings.

These studies were completed in late 1955. The conclusion was that the bridge was feasible and economically sound and would pay for itself over a reasonable number of years. It would cost about \$25,400,000 and net tolls for 46 years would bring in \$66,213,000.

The hitch came when the report said that because of the low traffic expected in the early years it was not feasible to finance the project by revenue bonds in an amount to cover the entire project cost. It recommended 50% be financed by revenue bonds and 50% from other sources as a loan to be repaid after retiring the bonds. The bonds would be retired in 26 years and also cover maintenance and operation. It was also suggested that the sponsors seek federal aid.

The Port made extensive explorations into the federal highways aid programs, both by itself and through the two state highways departments, but without success. Secondary loans and the fact that federal aid funds were not to be used on toll projects seemed to halt this approach.

Hopes for any federal aid were also dimmed when Pacific County Attorney James E. Duree requested Senators Magnuson and Jackson to inquire into this possibility. Both senators responded and were supportive of the project, as was President Eisenhower. The answer came back from federal highways officials that the project did not qualify for funding under the laws in effect.

The bridge became a legislative matter in the session of 1957. Prior to that time it was a matter of discussion and mainly at the county level. In the campaign of 1956 everyone running in the Pacific County district was very favorable. Senator Wilson, my opponent, and myself were supportive and it really wasn't, nor ever was, a partisan political matter. All of us tried to make sure of that.

I went to the State Senate in 1957. The session was marked by a hotly fought battle led by Rep. Julia Butler Hansen to build a toll bridge across Puget Sound. It passed the House and lacked one vote of passing in the Senate. Mrs. Hansen, with her usual vigor and intensity, zeroed in on toll bridge financing matters in both the 1957 and 1959 sessions. She went on to Congress in 1960.



I had worked with Julia in the House and supported her bridge program when in the senate in 1957 I was appointed on the interim joint highways committee on adjournment of the '57 session.

Normally the committee chairmanship alternated each two years between a House and Senate member. Julia wanted another term as chairman and I supported her. She was the instigator and creator of the committee and it was to her leadership that we owed its power in state highway matters.

After her election as chairman she asked me what I would like to do on the committee. I said I would like to head a subcommittee working on the Astoria-Megler bridge, and consequently I was named chairman of a subcommittee on Columbia River toll bridges. At her request, I named an advisory committee made up of leading citizens from different parts of the state that had Columbia River bridge projects in their vicinity. These included problems with trying to get the tolls off the Vancouver Interstate Bridge, a bridge at Biggs Rapids, and some other problems, along with Astoria-Megler.

I find the following amusing now, as I look back.

Julia was not one to surrender authority to anyone. The governor had signed a bond contract backed up by tolls on the Vancouver bridges just before the new interstate highway act was passed. With its passage, funds were available to make it a free bridge. To do this required negotiations with bonding people, Senators Magnuson and Jackson and many others. Meetings were held of which I was never informed and Julia's secretary told me confidentially that I never was chairman of Columbia River toll bridges, but of a subcommittee on the "LOWER Columbia River bridge."

Julia never said a word to me about this even in later years, but from the time of her meeting with the two senators, she always addressed my letters, in her own handwriting, to myself, chairman of the LOWER Columbia River bridge subcommittee.



Oregon State High photo courtesy Robert Bailey

Pier and approach construction (l.) and 405-foot high derrick on barge (r.) on the Oregon side.



It did irk me a little, but Julia's secretary and I often laughed about it later and I was more concerned to push on the Astoria project than to incur her wrath and have it thrown off track.

Here I must say that as tough and sometimes difficult to work with as Julia Butler Hansen could be at times, she was far and above the best and most talented legislator I have ever served with in either House. Her dictatorial manner was largely due to seeking to compete in a man's world and she had most men shrinking from her in fear. And she really had them terrorized. She was a very effective legislator and her interests were always followed by action, both in the Legislature and in Congress. She was always on our team insofar as the Astoria Bridge was concerned.

Senator Nat Washington and I introduced a bill, as did Reps. King and Tisdale, to authorize cooperation with Oregon on studies, but the bills were incorporated into the highways omnibus bill and authorized spending \$100,000 for studies relating to the project if Oregon put up a similar amount.

By agreement, Oregon undertook the engineering and design and other studies necessary for preliminary work on the bridge. The state of Washington undertook a new traffic survey to determine whether or not traffic was increasing and consider other factors which would make the construction of the bridge more feasible.

Our state hired the firm of Coverdale and Colpitts, the same group used a year or two before, who gave an unfavorable report at that time. It was felt that the former situation might have improved enough to make the project more saleable.

In the fall of 1958, we received word from Astoria that a preliminary report on the new study, contrary to our hopes, was even more unfavorable than that of two years before. Many accusations were made against the survey company as to their traffic counts at newer spots, and other criticisms.

At the next meeting of our joint committee I had received word that a staff member, hearing of the preliminary reports, prepared a report for the committee to go to the 1959 legislature saying that the bridge was not feasible and that no further action was recommended by my committee.

In order to keep the project alive for the 1959 session and since we had not as yet received a formal report from the survey company, my committee report to the session as adopted by the full legislative committee said "since no report has been received at the time of the adoption of this report . . . it is the recommendation of this committee that the Washington Toll Bridge Authority be authorized (by the legislature) to negotiate and enter into agreement with the Oregon Highways Commission for participation in construction of the bridge at Astoria when the project was deemed feasible."

At least the project was kept from gathering dust on a dusty research shelf.

Senator Washington and I introduced a bill in the 1959 session, which passed the legislature and which would allow our state to enter into agreement with Oregon to build a bridge at Astoria when found financially feasible.

I tried to make it clear to everyone that this did not mean actual construction. It did not give one penny, but it was aimed at keeping the project on the front burner for further negotiation.

Even this bill met with opposition on the Senate floor, chiefly from the Clark County delegation which did not like the possible diversion of traffic to the coast. The bill passed the Senate by 35-13 and was later passed by the House and signed by the governor.



Our session ended on March 27 and a week or so later the Oregon legislature passed a bill authorizing construction of the bridge with general obligation bonds amounting to \$24,000,000, but with the proviso that "none of these bonds will be floated until such time as a valid and enforceable contract in which the states of Washington and Oregon are parties, is executed, whereby, among other things, the State of Washington is bound to pay promptly, as they become due, not less than fifty percent of the principal, interest and other charges incidental to the issuance, sale and retirement of the bonds, and the cost and maintenance and operation of the bridge."

The two bills were impossible to integrate and both legislatures had adjourned. Our state bill authorized revenue bonds when financially feasible and the Oregon bill authorized issuing general obligation bonds when Washington agreed to pick up half the tab. Attorneys in both states agreed that it was not legally possible to proceed without further new legislation.

Be that as it may, the 1959 Oregon law was to be the basis in 1961 for agreements reached by the two states which made the bridge possible.

The basic disagreement in our state was never over the project itself but over the fact that toll projects in Washington had always been built by issuance of revenue bonds and their repayment guaranteed from the proceeds of the income derived from the tolls. No study thus far had agreed that toll revenues would be sufficient to pay off the bond issue needed and in such conditions it was unlikely anyone would be able to sell revenue bonds.

Oregon, on the other hand, was able to float general obligation bonds against the faith and credit of the entire state. In Washington, G.O. bonds required the vote of all the people at a general election, and there was little chance the areas outside Southwest Washington would vote for a bond issue for a bridge at Astoria.

We encountered some opposition from upriver areas such as Vancouver and Longview, not to mention Portland. The newspapers in all three cities took a dim view of a bridge at Astoria.

Chief opposition in Washington, however, came from highway user groups: the Good Roads Association, the Inland Empire Automobile Association and many others. They feared that it would set a bad precedent if toll projects were to have deficit guarantees out of the highway funds. They feared that it could lead to a raid on the sacred funds and eventually tie up moneys badly needed in general highway programs.

During the 1959-1961 session, I was named chairman of the Toll Bridge Financing subcommittee of the interim committee and we still had Astoria-Megler on our agenda.

In the spring of 1959 our two interim committees met at Portland. After a meeting with the staff and members of my subcommittee, I proposed that a 50-50 split of any deficit was too high, that Oregon had a tremendous stake in paying out \$100,000 or more on a ferry deficit, and that the split should be more like 75-25.

This met with immediate rebuff from Oregon and the Portland **Oregonian** chastised me in an editorial headed "No 75-25."

At that meeting there seemed to be little chance for agreement, but every once in a while there were some hopeful signs.

In order to try and get a more favorable report, and due to the charges that the last study had not been well done, my committee and Pacific County asked the highways department to use some of its unspent \$100,000 to have another look.



# Evolution of the Astoria-Megler Bridge 1963 - 1966

The **Chinook Observer** records yearly progress.



Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil



Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil





Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil



Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil



Hearings on the Hood Canal bridge and a few other things delayed action on this until June and we received a letter from Director Bill Bugge that the remainder of the unexpended funds would revert back on June 30 at the end of the fiscal year. Since the Oregon commission would not meet again until after that date, it was legally impossible to use this money.

With Mrs. Hansen's approval we obtained an appropriation of \$14,000 from our interim committee funds to hire the firm of Bertram Lindman and Associates to make an economic study. This study was to determine the increased economic values on both sides of the bridge which would be improved if a bridge were built and just what it would do to property values. It was felt that some of these factors could offset some of the anticipated losses on the bridge, and it was a bold effort to keep the project alive until the next session. This was quickly approved by the committee and the study commenced.

## *Diversions?*

---

Things could never go smoothly. There had to be unexpected glitches and diversions.

Since the drive for the bridge was picking up steam and it looked like something would be done in the near future, many came forth with their own proposals.

One of the state's economic development advisors had gone to Cathlamet to assist that little community in developing a better economy. Seizing on the publicity the bridge was receiving and probably also thinking he might please Rep. Julia Butler

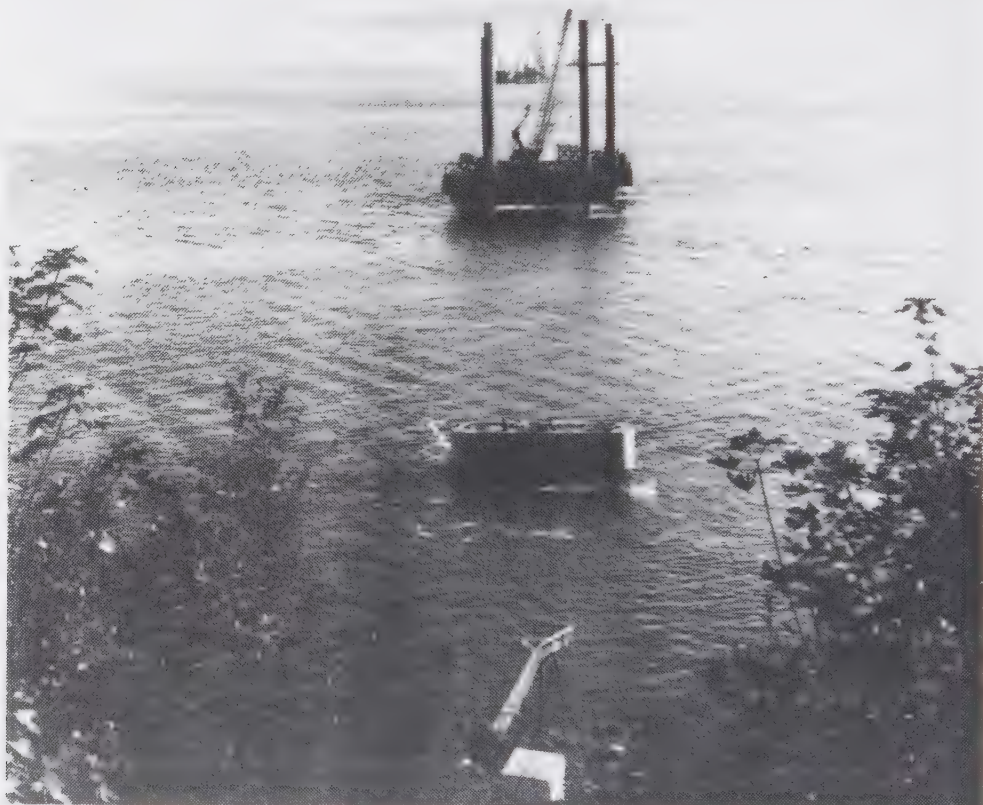


Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil

First Pier of the Astoria-Megler Bridge on Washington side.

Hansen in her hometown, he made a public statement that "The bridge does not belong in Astoria, it belongs in Wahkiakum county."

Of course, when reported, this caused some real problems in Astoria.

Mrs. Hansen called me and in confidence asked that I do anything I could to stop this talk and smooth over the ruffled Astorian feathers. She was unable to do much since it would appear to people in her own hometown that she was not interested in her own community.

Julia was perfectly aware that the only authorization was at Astoria as far as the state was concerned; that the traffic counts that seemed too low at Astoria would be much lower up river, and since the Longview bridge was not too far away, a bridge at the Cathlamet site would be totally unfeasible. Moreover, to stir up controversy as to a site at this time would utterly defeat all progress made.

I arranged to meet with Mr. Bettendorf at the Port of Astoria the next day and before leaving called Governor Rosellini. An aide told me that the governor was busy and could not return any calls for a day or so, or at the soonest, much later in the day.

My response was to tell him to tell the governor that I was headed for Astoria and that the Port of Astoria people and myself were holding a press conference and I intended to blast the governor for sending a man into the area to cause dissension and destroy our working relationship with Oregon.

Shortly after I hung up the phone it rang and when I picked up the receiver a voice said, "This is Al, Bob. Do you have a problem?"

I explained the problem to him and he asked what he could do without making even more publicity. I suggested he wait a day or two, call the economic development man back to Olympia and perhaps put him in a vault doing research. It was a short time later the man left for Olympia, but I was able that day to assure the Port of Astoria people that neither the Governor nor Mrs. Hansen were considering anything but Astoria for the bridge.

Unfortunately the stories crept into some economic development circles and were publicized, and while I publicly denied the stories, I was really not able at that time to reveal Mrs. Hansen's efforts to stop the effort to change the site.

Shortly after, when the press asked Julia about a possible site change her curt reply, typical Julia, didn't help much: "If you don't want the bridge down there, I know a place where it could be put and it wouldn't cost as much."

As one who was at every meeting relating to the bridge after it became a legislative matter, I can truthfully say that the Washington side, with Julia Hansen present, never discussed any other site than Astoria. Her support and that of Governor Rosellini, always remained firm, even though the latter needed a little prodding from time to time.

The period of 1959-1961 saw many meetings between the Washington and Oregon highways people, interim committees and other groups.

Those meetings saw negotiations in earnest and somewhat based on the Oregon legislation that called for a 50-50 split on the deficit. Our attorney, Tom Garlington, approached one of the meetings with a proposal from our subcommittee that each side build its own approaches and the split of 75-25 be accepted. This uneven split was again quickly rejected by Oregon but we held firm that it would not be possible to pass a bill in our legislature on a 50-50 split. Oregon also objected to each state building its own approaches, pointing out that Washington's approach would cost about \$160,000 while Oregon would have to pay \$1,400,000.





Photo courtesy of Wayne O'Neil

Shaver Tug and Barge moves final section to touch with Washington shore.



Photo courtesy of Wayne O'Neil

Span # 6 of the Astoria-Megler Bridge floated into place on the Washington side.

In spite of the disagreements, the two states decided to continue to negotiate.

During this time, Rep. Hansen was running for Congress and was elected in the 1960 election. Sen. Nat Washington took over as chairman of the whole committee and gave us invaluable support every step of the way.

## *The 1961 Session*

---

We were rapidly approaching the beginning of the 1961 session in both states and it was imperative that some sort of mutual agreement be reached so that bills of both states be almost identical. Washington needed a new law and Oregon needed to amend the law it had passed in 1959.

On January 28, 1961, two weeks after the Washington session started, the two committees again met in Portland to try to pull together the loose ends. Discussion ranged on everything, but principally on the approaches and the percentage split on the deficit.

Tom Garlington, our attorney, presented our case and pointed out that as far as statewide support on deficit financing went, it was likely that the Naches Tunnel and other proposals in the more densely populated areas would get more legislative support than the Astoria bridge. He suggested that a 50-50 split would never fly.

After lengthy discussion by all on both sides of the river, looking like a real stand-off, both sides took a recess in order to caucus. When we returned, Senator Washington presented our case. He said that the 50-50 split was unacceptable; that the state of Oregon was losing up to \$200,000 each year on the ferries, and the two states did not agree on the amount, it was suggested that Oregon should put this amount up front and then the balance of the deficit be split on a 50-50 ratio, obligating each state to about \$200,000 a year in the early years.

This was not accepted nor rejected outright and it seemed like we might be on the road to an agreement. It was announced by Oregon that if this formula were adopted it would actually result in about a 68-32 division between states.

It was agreed that talks must continue and Senator Washington appointed me and Oregon appointed Rep. Bill Holmstrom to represent our states and work out details.

On a stormy Sunday, February 2, 1961, my wife and son and I took the ferry across to Astoria and met with Bill Holmstrom. He had brought with him Senator Dan Thiel, Port Manager Bettendorf and the editor of the **Astorian-Budget**, Fred Andrus.

We invited Andrus to join us and went to a room in the John Jacob Astor Hotel where we decided to sequester ourselves until we had reached agreement.

After many hours of discussion we did reach agreement, based largely on the unwritten discussions in Portland the week before, and following pretty closely on that pattern.

Earlier in the month, Senators Don Talley and Harry Elway joined me in introducing Senate Bill 431, which would lay out a formula of the 75-25 split of deficit payments, among other things. On return to Olympia after the Astoria conference, the highways committee called the bill up for hearing and I submitted several amendments to conform with the Astoria conference. When the committee finished, adopting most of them, it offered a substitute bill incorporating all of the rewritten bill into one to avoid confusion. Substitute Senate Bill 431 was the vehicle which passed the Senate and House later and was to enable Washington's part in construction of the bridge.



At committee hearings of the bill in the Senate, Pacific County commissioners appeared in support and offered to build the approach on the Washington side at about \$180,000. This was hastily accepted. At another point, one of the commissioners challenged the gloomy feasibility study figures and was challenged to "put up or shut up" to the extent he offered that Pacific County would pay up to \$40,000 a year for 30 years on any deficit. This, too, was accepted and the bill headed for the Senate floor with a vote of 23 to 0. Only 25 votes were needed to pass a bill through the Senate!

When the bill came to the floor we had excellent support from the sponsors and Senator Washington. It passed by 37-3.

I noted that Senator Bill Raugust, ranking Republican on the highways committee, was absent at the time of the vote. Bill had opposed the bill because of his opposition to deficit financing of toll projects.

When he appeared on the floor, I asked for reconsideration of the vote just taken. Everyone thought I had flipped, but I explained that I thought Senator Raugust should be given a chance to express himself on the subject. He made a short talk in opposition to such type of deficit financing, and we voted again, this time and finally it was 40-3! Incidentally, I also wanted to get the bill on its way and was afraid that someone else would move for reconsideration and hold it up for a day or two. A bill could only be reconsidered once.

I later found that Bill Raugust, a very good friend, had actually left the floor deliberately in order not to speak against my bill.

With a head of steam like 40-3, the bill headed for the House. We were fortunate at that time to have Sid Snyder serving as assistant chief clerk. It proved to be a position from which he could help steer, quietly persuade, and keep all of us informed as to its progress.

House highways committee chairman, Rep. Joe Beierlein came from the old "no subsidy" school and it took lots of pressure from members, Snyder and Reps. Chet

King, Eric Anderson and Jack Burtch, to move the bill along. The user groups put in a last ditch effort to derail the bill and stop what they termed a raid on highway funds.

The highway department under Bill Bugge was not supportive either—not against the project, but the funding. I had to call Gov. Rosellini again and later Bill Bugge called to tell me that he would not be appearing for or against the bill anymore. Bugge was always a good friend and helped in every way possible, differing only on the means of financing. "Squeeze" Glaze, secretary of the Washington Toll Bridge Authority, under Bugge, was immensely helpful and willing to assist insofar as the laws of the time would allow.

Rep. Dan Evans, an engineer by pro-



Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil

Mr. & Mrs. Johnson on the "Last Run."

fession, was also a member of the interim committee. He, too, did not like subsidy financing out of dedicated funds. Looking ahead to running for governor, he had made commitments to support the bridge. Sid Snyder talked with him about the united support for a bridge from everyone on the Peninsula and it resulted in Dan speaking against the bridge on the floor, but voting for the bill.

The session was drawing to a close and the bill had not come out on the calendar on the last day, but later a supplemental calendar appeared with the bridge bill on it, passing 67-22.

I never asked Snyder about it, but the "supplemental calendar" looked like an inside job, perhaps from a chief clerk or an assistant chief clerk!

Meanwhile, in Oregon, Rep. Holmstrom and Sen. Thiel were amending their 1959 bill to correspond with our Astoria agreement and coordinate with the action in the Washington legislature. It passed the Oregon House 48-7 and when up for a Senate vote there was not a quorum on the floor, much to the anxiety of Senator Thiel. It turned out to be a practical joke of his colleagues and they streamed back onto the floor passing the bill 26-1.

Not too long after this, it was signed by Gov. Hatfield.

Our bill, when signed by Gov. Rossellini, became Chapter 209 of the Laws of 1961.

## *The Bill*

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The enabling bills called for Oregon to float general obligation bonds and have charge of the engineering and construction, an agreement worked out by the two highway departments. Pacific County was to finance the north approach at a cost of about \$185,000.

If a deficit were to occur, Oregon would pay the first \$100,000, the balance to be from both states, with Washington paying 40% of the balance, but never over \$200,000 per year. Pacific County was pledged to pay \$40,000 of the state's share, but never over one-third of the state's payment, for the next thirty years.

In 1969 I was able to put an amendment on the highways omnibus bill relieving Pacific County of its debt on the deficit. At that time, the State Highways Department said that since it had not set up billing procedures, the bill providing relief of all future debts and those due and accruing, the county was probably off scot free.

## *Celebration*

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When the Oregon bill had passed, Peninsula people and those from Astoria held meetings on each side of the river to observe the joyous occasion. Large bonfires were to be lit on each side, but the night was wet and visibility limited, and to my knowledge no one saw the other's fire four miles away.

Astoria followed a short time later with a welcome-home party for Holmstrom and Thiel, to which our local legislators were invited. This included a program, downtown rally, parade and a dinner at the John Jacob Astor. It was a gala occasion which I remember well because my wife and I missed the last ferry and had to drive up to Longview and home the long way. We got home just a short time before I had to leave for work at Aberdeen. Oh, for a bridge!





Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil

Crew removing official ferry licenses and permits from bulkhead.



Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil

Engineers in the engine room of the last run of the ferry.



Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil

Restaurant crew waves good-bye on the ferry slip during the "Last Run" of the Astoria - Megler ferry M.V. Chessman.



The Peninsula people put on a crab feed and recognition night at the Long Beach Elks for local sponsors and supporters as well as legislators and leaders of the drive on the Oregon side.

There were still a few hurdles as the county commissioners, the state highways department and others had to work out details of financing and other matters. The state finally gave a loan from the highways department to the county so that the approach could be built, paying it back over a seven year period of time.

The highways commission and Pacific County also had long negotiations over the \$40,000 a year contribution to the deficit and that agreement, calling for withholding it from the county's annual allocation of the gas tax, was signed under protest by several members of the State Highways Commission.

The "protests" were based, not on opposition to the bridge, but fears that Pacific County would be undermining its long-range highways program by thus obligating such a large share of its moneys.



Astoria - Megler Bridge with Oregon on the

**The En**

## Teamwork \_\_\_\_\_

As I said at the beginning, the teamwork on this project was superb. Everyone pitched in and helped and success was the result of that cooperation.

The Ilwaco Chamber of Commerce sponsored a move on its own to get two local citizens to “lobby” legislators both before and during the 1961 session. While some people belabored the idea, saying it was the job of legislators, the Ilwaco group, with the help of the Peninsula Resort Association, raised about \$3,000 to cover their expenses.

Selected to do this was Robert Maddin, manager of the Port of Ilwaco, a Republican, and Jack Petit, an Ilwaco businessman and former legislator, a Democrat. These men made a trip around the state visiting legislators prior to the session and during the session were about at all times, visiting legislators and keeping our local members informed as to the success they were finding. Sometimes they



Oregon State Highway photo courtesy Robert C. Bailey

ft and the ferry M/V Chessman in foreground.

of an Era

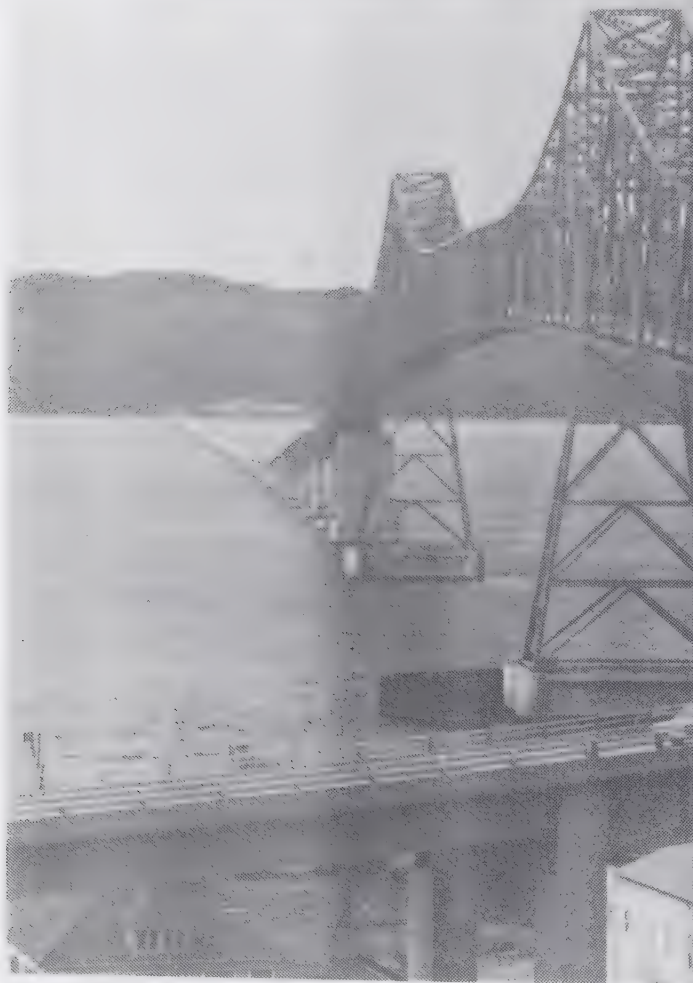


would advise us legislators to visit a certain person, but many times we would steer them onto the people they could see. We didn't want anyone ignorant about Astoria-Megler when it hit the floors.

During the session, the Peninsula people put on a legislative dinner at the Hotel Olympian for all members of the legislature. I can still remember the very impressive plea for the bridge by Dr. John Campiche.

It is impossible to list all of the names on the north side of the river that deserve credit. In Oregon, our chief contacts were with Dick Bettendorf and Chuck DeFoe, and with the legislative mechanics, in the Oregon legislature, Rep. Bill Holmstrom of Gearhart and Senator Dan Thiel of Astoria. Mayor Harry Steinbock of Astoria was a solid promoter. The fact that Oregon Governor Bob Holmes was from Astoria did not hurt our cause in the early days, and his successor, Gov. Mark Hatfield, certainly helped a lot. There are many from Oregon and it would be impossible to list them all.

On the Washington side, Governors Rosellini, and later Governor Evans, highways Director Bill Bugge, and "Squeegee" Glaze of the Toll Bridge Authority,



**The finished Astoria-Megler Bridge**

headed the list of statewide officials. The two latter, along with our highways commission, favored the bridge, but had difficulties, until told by the legislature as to how to finance it.

In the Washington Legislature I would have to recognize Rep. Julia Butler Hansen and Senator Nat Washington, along with committee attorney Tom Garlington, for support at all times. Senators Al Henry, Don Talley and Harry Elway, as well as Reps. Clyde Tisdale, Chet King, Eric Anderson and Jack Burtch, helped greatly in co-sponsoring the legislative bills and guiding the legislation through both houses.

Pacific County commissioners from the 1930s on, all deserve appreciation. The county, usually pushed for cash, was always willing to give and support anything possible to the best of their limited ability. County Prosecutor James Duree, acting for himself and the commissioners, took over as spokesman and was a speaker at many hearings and meetings promoting the bridge in the 1950s when the final drive started. Verna Jacobson, Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners, handled



Oregon State Highways photo, Courtesy Robert C. Bailey





Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil

## **Freddie . . . the bread man**

was aboard for the last paid trip

Freddie Lengel, with over 40 years at Franz Bakery, worked both the Oregon and Washington sides of the Columbia River. He was considered "a fixture" on the ferry run.

much of the correspondence relating to the bridge. With credit to all commissioners, I think that Bob Kirkman, Seaview, gave hundreds of hours of effort and deserves remembrance for his hard work and efforts.

Every official, mayors and civic leaders, were all on the team.

*The Opening* \_\_\_\_\_

The Peninsula really went all out when the bridge opened in August of 1966. They invited all legislators to their communities, provided lodging and a series of tours, visits, dinners, receptions, and just about everything they could imagine. A good portion of Senate and House members attended.

I remember one Seattle senator who had been very supportive, cornering me at the Long Beach Elks and saying, "My gawd, is that your little bridge?"

**Dedication Program, August 27, 1966**

**DEDICATION PROGRAM**

(Ceremonies Begin at 2 p.m., August 27, 1966)

- National Anthem* (Astoria High School Band)
- Invocation* (Reverend H. Robert Grossman, Pastor of the Church of the Nazarene, President of the Astoria Ministerial Association)
- Opening Remarks* (Glenn L. Jackson, Chairman, Oregon State Highway Commission and Master of Ceremonies for the Dedication Events)
- Remarks* (Elmer C. Huntley, Chairman, Washington State Highway Commission)
- Address* (The Honorable Daniel J. Evans, Governor of Washington)
- Address* (The Honorable Mark O. Hatfield, Governor of Oregon)
- Official Opening of the Astoria Bridge* (Governor Daniel J. Evans, assisted by Miss Washington, Miss Sandra Lee Marth, and Governor Mark O. Hatfield, assisted by Miss Oregon, Miss Estrellita Shiel)

**CONTRACTORS ON ASTORIA BRIDGE PROJECT**

Substructure	DELONG CORPORATION	New York, New York
Substructure	RAYMOND INTERNATIONAL, INC.	New York, New York
Superstructure	U. S. STEEL CORPORATION	Portland, Oregon
Desdemona Sands Viaduct	J. H. POMEROY & CO. AND BEN C. GERWICK, INC.	San Francisco, Calif.
Rip Rap Piers	UMPQUA RIVER NAVIGATION CO.	Reedsport, Oregon
(Astoria Appr.	PACIFIC CONCRETE CO.	Portland, Oregon
(Bldg. Dem.	D. A. LAVELLE CONSTRUCTION CO.	Portland, Oregon
(R. Imp.	ALL-CITY TREE & LANDSCAPE SERVICE	Portland, Oregon
Washington Approach	J. N. CONLEY, INC.	Portland, Oregon

**TOLL SCHEDULE**

	Toll
Light Vehicle and Passengers	\$1.50
Light Vehicle with 1-Axle Trailer	2.00
Light Vehicle with 2-Axle Trailer	2.25
Truck or Bus, 2-Axle	3.00
Truck or Bus, 3-Axle	3.75
Truck Combination, 4-Axle	4.50
Truck Combination, 5-Axle	5.25
Truck Combination, 6-Axle	6.00
Motorcycles	1.00



## DEDICATION

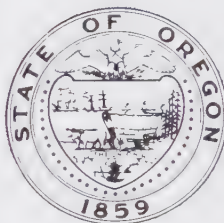
*Communications breed economic growth.*

*With the dedication of this magnificent structure, the Astoria Bridge, the last major obstacle in a continuous vehicular route along the Pacific coast between Mexico on the south and Canada on the north has been eliminated.*

*This stretch of water where the Columbia River joins the Pacific Ocean has proved a formidable adversary to man's transportation progress in this area for countless ages.*

*It is on the auspicious occasion of the dedication of the Astoria Bridge that we pay humble homage to all who have labored in any way to make this dream of a structural bridging of this mighty river here come true.*

August 27, 1966.



**MARK O. HATFIELD**  
Governor of Oregon

## ASTORIA BRIDGE

All Oregon and indeed all the West has reason to rejoice as we pause to dedicate this tremendous structure we call the Astoria Bridge. It is the last major link in easy vehicular travel on Highway US 101 along the Pacific Coast from Mexico to Canada.

The addition of this man-made wonder to our Northwest Coast removes the last obstacle to the free flow of tourism, trade and commerce between our states. It is in itself sufficient stimulus to draw tourists to Oregon. And certainly it will do much to enhance the personal as well as commercial concerns of those who make their homes on the Oregon coast.

The construction of the bridge was a tremendous undertaking. In a way, it characterizes the new era of greatness—of social and economic growth, to which Oregon has dedicated itself in its second century of statehood. So it stands as much a symbol of our progress as well as a source of pride to us all.

**MARK O. HATFIELD**  
GOVERNOR OF OREGON



As of mid-1990, the Washington State Highways Commission records show that our state had paid in a total of \$1,861,000 towards the deficit subsidy. Starting in 1982, the bridge started showing more income than outgo and the state had (in 1990) been repaid a total of \$1,077,000, leaving \$784,000 to be repaid before Washington is totally reimbursed.

At one time during our long battle, Jimmie O'Neil, Editor of the **Chinook Observer**, wrote an editorial saying, "What we need is more bridge and fewer studies". I couldn't have agreed with him more, but some of these "studies" were like administering mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, trying to keep the project alive at times when financially it seemed hopeless.

Some of the upriver papers, and eventually one in Chicago, called Astoria-Megler "the bridge to nowhere". I liked Dick Murfin's headline in the **Ilwaco Tribune** on the weekend the bridge opened: "Welcome to the Bridge to Somewhere".



Photo courtesy Wayne O'Neil

Night scene of the finished Astoria-Megler Bridge, 1966.



**An effective member of Congress, working for YOU!**



Julia Butler Hansen (for Congress) , Democrat Third District

## **A Family Involved in Freedom:**

**An Interview with Julia Butler Hansen**

**(An Adaptation by Robert C. Bailey)**

### **Introductory Notes by Larry Weathers:**

Robert C. "Bob" Bailey, a native of Pacific County and one of the founders of our Historical Society, is a frequent *Sou'wester* contributor. His distinguished career includes many years in the newspaper publishing business, a term as Pacific County Clerk (Democrat, 1946-50), nearly three decades in the state legislature representing the 19th legislative district (Representative, 1951-56, and Senator, 1957-77), and six years as a member of the state Utilities and Transportation Commission (three years as chairman). Bob and his wife, Lee, reside in Olympia, Washington.

Bob's friendship and working relationship with Julia Butler Hansen began in the 1950s when they were both members of the state House of Representatives. Bob ran all of Julia's congressional campaigns from 1960 to 1974 and was her Western Administrative Assistant from 1966 until her retirement.

The Historical Society asked Bob to review and adapt Julia's 1976 oral history interview for publication in *The Sou'wester*. The tape and original transcript of Julia's interview are available from the Washington State Archives Division of the Office of Secretary of State, Olympia (Archives accession no. WKM 76-26 Dm).

Julia Butler Hansen was born in Portland, Ore, on June 14, 1907, and died in Cathlamet on May 3, 1988, at the age of 80. Her husband Henry, whom she married in 1939, died in December, 1981. Henry and Julia are survived by their son David Hansen of Vancouver, Washington.

Bob Bailey summarized Julia's character and career this way: "She was a terrific person to work for and she was a very brilliant and hardworking member (of Congress). She seemed to have a natural intuition to find a way to get things done. She was quite a taskmaster. She worked us hard but we never resented it because she worked hard herself."

## *Introduction*

The following pages are an adaptation of a taped interview with Julia Butler Hansen by David Myers, on September 16, 1976.

Mrs. Hansen represented the third Congressional District of Washington in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1960 until her retirement at the end of 1974. At that time she returned home to Cathlamet to take care of her ailing husband, Henry, and "do some of the things I always wanted to do, including writing."

Mr. Myers says it very well in his forward:

"Mrs. Hansen discusses her family background, land grants given to soldiers of the Revolution instead of cash, her family being in the Cathlamet area since 1882, her father's work on various Mormon and Northwest buildings and his involvement with local government, her mother, and family life.

"Her grandmother could vote in Washington Territory but lost the vote upon statehood. Both her mother and grandmother were involved with the women's suffrage movement and admired women who 'did things.' For 300 years her family has had a heritage of freedom and the women believed themselves to be the equals of men. She discusses how she got involved with politics 'an obligation to serve the people' and talks about the various campaigns and stories associated with them.

"Julia concludes the interview with a long discussion of women and women's rights and the importance of acquiring an education and skills." Julia Butler Hansen died on May 3, 1988 in Cathlamet.

## *The Interview*

**Mrs. Hansen:** My great grandmother's people on my mother's side settled in Groton, Massachusetts in the 1600s. My great grandfather's people on my mother's side settled in Maine, also in the 1600s.

On my father's side, my great grandparents came from the Culpepper area of Virginia.

When my son, David, and I were doing research on our family, we discovered that a standard question asked in each census was "Were you (or your father) born in the United States?" The answer for members of our family listings was always "yes". The records of both sides of our family go way back before the American Revolution.

My grandmother's family settled in New Hampshire as a result of the Revolutionary War land settlement. There was no money to pay the soldiers so they gave them land. Interestingly enough, my father's people had the same experience in Kentucky.

My grandfather's name was James Freeman Kimball. He was a Union veteran of the Civil War. His first wife had died and about 1873 he married my grandmother, Julia Ann Blood.



**Mr. Myers:** Did your grandmother have much education?

**Mrs. Hansen:** I think it was the usual education for that time. She was born in 1849 and when she was ten years old was taken by an aunt to New York City for a year. Grandmother went to private school there and used to talk about skating in Central Park, on the Hudson (River), and so on. She much enjoyed that year. Her parents were very literate and attended the academies of those days. There was very little formal education at that time for anyone up in the North Woodstock, N.H., area, but my grandmother had that much education, probably more than most of those about her.

My grandfather was known as a skilled "lumberman". He had been in charge of St. Lawrence River drives and was foreman of a crew taking timber down the St. Lawrence. My mother said he spoke French like a native. But times were tough in the East after the Civil War. He had heard about the Northwest and persuaded my grandmother, who really did not desire to do so, to go west.

They were with a group which included a number from New Hampshire and, as was the custom at that time, took a train. They did their own cooking and it took them about two weeks to cross the continent to San Francisco. From there they went north to Astoria by steamer, then up the Columbia on a river boat to Kalama. From there they went by train and stagecoach to their destination.

My grandparents settled in Mud Bay, near Olympia, where he was superintendent of a (logging) camp. My grandmother often said she never knew whether her bed was wet from tears or wet fir boughs. She said she couldn't tell the difference.

They were in Olympia until 1880 when hard times again hit the Northwest. They went to Portland, then to White Salmon and, in 1882, to Cathlamet. My grandfather built the Monroe house out in the valley. It served as his logging headquarters as well as a cookhouse and their home. My grandmother didn't particularly like this kind of living and in 1885 (they) bought this house where we now live. The occupant had been with the Hudsons Bay Company and had retired from Cowlitz Farms before coming to Cathlamet.

(Ed. note: Julia is referring to HBC employee James Birnie. Birnie is recognized as the founder of Cathlamet. Around 1842, Birnie pastured his cattle in the vicinity of present-day Cathlamet but did not build his first house, "Birnie's Retreat", until 1846. Birnie's second house, built 1857-60, was eventually purchased by James Kimball, Julia's maternal grandfather, in 1885. The house was bequeathed to Maude Butler, Julia's mother, and was Julia's home until her death in 1988.)

My father was born in Kentucky the year the Civil War ended. His name was Don Carlos Butler. Either my grandmother had been reading some of those Spanish romances or they were great admirers of the then famous Union General Don Carlos Buell. I never knew. He never went by the name Don Carlos but was called "Don" or "D.C."

That's the background of my family. It was a combination of North and South --a very strict New England upbringing with that of the typical Southerner.

My father was a very good worker and would enjoy hunting and fishing more than anything else on earth. When his mother died he left for Texas to ride the range. After a couple of years he went to Cripple Creek, Colorado. When the mining did not pan out there he went to Denver and learned the carpentry trade and went to Salt Lake City where the Mormons were doing a lot of building. He worked on one of their projects, whichever a non-Mormon was allowed to work on.

A friend of his heard of a contract to be let in Cathlamet to build a courthouse. They came to Cathlamet. My father stayed, leaving only to enlist in the Spanish-American War, but returning at its end.

**Mr. Myers:** What kind of work was your father doing in Cathlamet?

**Mrs. Hansen:** He was a carpenter and a contractor. Nothing fancy. Besides the courthouse (which later burned), he and another carpenter built several houses, some still standing. He did carpentry and repair work of all kinds. My husband, Henry, recently told me that my father did a lot of work for the cannery, repairing fish boats and so on.

My mother was a teacher. Her maiden name was Maude Eliza Kimball. After marriage she always went by the name of Maude K. Butler (Maude Kimball Butler).

**Mr. Myers:** And it was your mother and grandmother who were involved in politics and the women's suffrage movement?

**Mrs. Hansen:** They were to this extent: they were very interested participants. My grandmother came to the Territory (1877) at a time when women were soon granted suffrage. When Washington became a state in 1889, she lost her vote. I can tell you she was highly indignant about that! One of her legitimate gripes was that men would be going to the polls but first would visit a "blind pig" to get a few drinks so they could be told how to vote. Many could not read or write but they were still voting. And here was my grandmother, a very literate woman, but could not vote because she was a woman.

My grandmother had one goal -- everybody should have an education. It was not unusual in those days to inform a twelve or thirteen-year-old girl "You cannot continue to go to school, you have had enough education." But that was not true of my grandmother. When my grandfather died she took the money from his insurance and went to Portland in order that my mother could go to a high school --the old Portland High School.

My grandmother was also tremendously interested to make sure that my mother did some of the things that were not commonly accepted as necessary in those days. She insisted that my mother have painting lessons and that she pursue her art interest. Mother always liked art and was very talented. Grandmother just believed that an education was necessary for every person whether you were a woman or not.

These pioneer women were very dedicated to the suffrage cause and sincerely did not feel any inferiority to men at all. If they did they would not have given men the satisfaction of admitting to it. My grandmother never even considered that she did not have the right to talk and do and say whatever she pleased on a subject.

That was the way mother was, too.

**Mr. Myers:** What did they tell you about where they got those ideas?

**Mrs. Hansen:** They just believed in them. They were all native-born Americans for over three hundred years -- a heritage of freedom. There wasn't anywhere they got these ideas, they just believed everybody was equal and that was it. It wasn't any strange idea, especially for women coming out west. Western women in those days were just as responsible for life as were the men. Women on wagon trains didn't



load rifles just for their husbands to fire. They fired them, too. My grandmother was an excellent shot. My mother always told the story of some hawks flying over the yard after my grandmother's chickens. Grandfather was not at home so she calmly went into the house, got the shotgun and winged a few. That was the end of the hawks.

My grandmother and my mother absolutely had no use for people who did not cook, keep a neat house, sew and do other necessary things for themselves. My folks had been trained to do all of these things and that's the way I was raised. If I ever left my house dirty while off on business I would receive a lecture from my mother that would have lasted until Doomsday. I'm very old-fashioned about my house. I like pretty things and I like a nice home. That's the way with my garden. I think you can work on women's rights and other causes and still take regular baths.

**Mr. Myers:** Fortunately, many people agree with you on this.

**Mrs. Hansen:** Grandmother and mother admired some early women in the suffrage movement. Two I remember: one was a leader in Portland and the other in Astoria. They admired women who did things and could do things. I think my grandmother often wished that she had had more opportunity to live her life in a different way.

When my grandfather died, she kept boarders. None of us has ever been wealthy. Money was never a goal in life for my grandmother, my father, or my mother and it has never been one for myself. We were taught there were other things to live for, principally SERVICE.

I think my mother was just a little past sixteen when she received her teacher's certificate and taught down in the end of one of the valleys near Skamokawa, the end of nowhere. She later taught at Monmouth, Oregon, returning to teach in Cathlamet and Skamokawa. She taught primary grades at the old school on the bluff in Skamokawa. It has been restored and is known as the Redmen's Hall. She also taught at Eagle Cliff and in Cathlamet and then ran for county superintendent of schools. She was elected in the days when women could run for office but could not vote.

**Mr. Myers:** When would this be?

**Mrs. Hansen:** Well, let me see. She was elected Wahkiakum county superintendent of schools in 1902 for a two-year term and was reelected in 1904. I was born in June, 1907, about four months after mother's term was over. It was not customary for women in those days to go out in public when expecting a youngster, but mother felt that the voters had elected her and it was her obligation to finish her term. It took a lot of gumption on her part.

**Mr. Myers:** What did she say about how she felt about being superintendent and not having a simple vote?

**Mrs. Hansen:** She was furious, naturally, watching every man in Christendom, whether they could read or write or knew what they were voting for or not, marching down to vote and she could not because she was a woman.

My grandmother lived with us when I was little. She died when I was nine. My two brothers were very close and my mother was very busy so my grandmother did lots of chatting with me so I learned to make ginger snaps, bake pies, and things like that, as a little girl. I spent many hours learning to sew, which I detested, but it didn't matter, you did it anyway.

Please remember that in those days there was no radio nor television; no cars nor roads, and the only way to get out of Cathlamet was by boat. Meal times were not just a time to eat, but a time to sit and discuss -- and listen -- with the rest of the family. The arrival of the Portland **Oregonian** always provided a source for subjects of the day. It didn't come until about noon, but in time for our people to read it sometime during the afternoon and discuss it at supper and at breakfast the next morning.

We always had interesting people at the house. There were no fancy hotels in Cathlamet, so Judge Sol Smith from South Bend always stayed at our place. The state superintendent and many others would stop. My grandparents' friends of early-day Portland, former governors, attorneys, and so on, would stop by. The same with friends of my father. The house always had guests like these who came and contributed a lot to our thoughts and discussions.

**Mr. Myers:** Did your mother hold elective offices at other times?

**Mrs. Hansen:** No. My father was county sheriff. First he had been a member of the city council for many years. He was elected sheriff in 1908 and reelected in 1910. After a two-year layoff (ed. note: a constitutional restriction to two consecutive terms) he was again elected in 1914 and was serving as sheriff when he died in February, 1916.

**Mr. Myers:** You have gone into politics and public service far deeper than most people do. Did any of this come from your mother? Did she talk about that?

**Mrs. Hansen:** I was brought up to believe that you had an obligation to serve, to do something for people. It didn't matter whether it was public service or what, but there was always a feeling that you should serve.

My mother was teaching in Pierce County and I became active in the Young Democrats in the 1928 campaign. I also was active in 1932.

We were gone from Cathlamet from 1921 until 1934. My mother felt that we would not get an education if we stayed in Cathlamet. The high school was not accredited and so she went to work at Orting and later became grade school principal at Buckley. When we returned I had received my college education.

The depression was not very helpful, although I did get word in the fall that my book, "Singing Paddles", had won a national prize and that was great because I had always wanted to write.

Politics solved that. You cannot be dodging people, solving problems for them day and night, and still write. One of these days I am going to say no to everything and go back to writing. I think that after thirty-eight years in public office a person is entitled to a few years to do as they please.

After the presidential campaigns, I became active in the state organization of Young Democrats. I ran for the Cathlamet city council because there were some sewer problems I thought needed attention and it didn't seem anyone was doing anything about it. Later, some Democrats in Cowlitz county persuaded me to work in the 1937 legislature in the bill drafting room and learn firsthand about the legislative process. They said the man elected from the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum district



in 1936 was going to move out of the district and would not run again. He did not run. I ran and was elected to the state house of representatives in 1938. At that time, I really had no intention to stay in politics. I was married to Henry Hansen in 1939 and thought this was probably the time to get out. My husband said, "Well, it's up to you, do as you please. You must remember you do a lot for the working people as a legislator."

I was interested in all kinds of legislation, especially concerning education. In 1946, when our son David was born, I was going to quit again. Some far-out people took out after me. That was the wrong thing to do because it stirred up my Irish. It also stirred up a great many friends who came to my support and I stayed in.

After a brief bout with thinking of running for Congress in 1958, I decided against it. In 1960, when the incumbent Republican congressman (Russell Mack of Hoquiam) died, I finally made the choice to run after a great deal of pressure from friends all over the district and throughout the state. I recognized the fact that while the district was not that Democratic in 1960, it would probably have been Republican if it had not been for my name familiarity -- and Hansen was a good Scandinavian name. I also had the advantage of being a woman running against several men and being the only woman, my name stood out in the group.

**Mr. Myers:** Your husband and family seemed to be supportive of this?

**Mrs. Hansen:** Henry is a very supportive person. I told him one time "you married me when I was in public office so you have to accept the consequences". But he never, never has said a word against it.

One of life's really tragic things is that there are many people who feel it is degrading for them to do anything at labor. My husband was a blacksmith; he was a darned good blacksmith. My father was a carpenter; a darned good carpenter. I earned my way through college by cleaning and cooking and doing all kinds of things and I'm not ashamed of it. But there is a (part of) society that is desperately ashamed to let it be known that they worked their way to do anything. I think it is a kind of refreshing thing about Jimmy Carter, our president. He's never been afraid to admit that he worked. I'm sorry for young people who are scared to admit they are working or have to work . . . I always had to work. When your father dies and your mother is a widow, you are going to work to earn that education. My brother worked his way through school and I did also. That's why I have always taken a particular interest in helping young people get a job so they could earn their own way.

If I had one thing that I could point to as something I have done, it has been to help young people get an education. Black, white, Indian, it doesn't matter as long as they have the opportunity so they can. An education isn't so that you can make money. An education is so that you can understand and translate life, that is what education is all about.

**Mr. Myers:** That's getting to be a very old-fashioned idea, that education is for understanding life.

**Mrs. Hansen:** Well, it is, but that's really what it's all about, isn't it? If you never worked, never had to work, you will really never know how some people feel. You know that Indian saying: "Unless you've walked in my moccasins you have no idea what it feels like to be an Indian." I think it's a very true saying . . .

# The Great White Fleet

Editor's note: We are grateful to Rodney K. Williams, Long Beach, for the following letter he found among family papers. Alfred E. King, writer of the letter, was Rod's maternal grandfather. The King family lived for many years in Ilwaco, later moving to Oregon City. Elaine King, Alfred's daughter, married L.D. Williams, Jr., second son of L.D. Williams and Eliza Whealdon Williams of Ilwaco. (See *Sou'westers* for Spring: 1967, and 1987: Autumn and Winter.)

## *Introduction*

by Rodney K. Williams

In 1907, President Teddy Roosevelt dispatched 16 battleships and 4 destroyers of the Atlantic Fleet on a 14-month round-the-world cruise. It was a show of naval force for the world to see and underlined his philosophy of "speak softly but carry a big stick". It was called "The Great White fleet" because all the ships had been painted white, a practice no longer followed. At the end of the 46,000 mile cruise, the Navy had proved it could easily shift from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

The following letter, dated May 20, 1908, is an account of the day the fleet arrived off the mouth of the Columbia River. It was written by Mr. Alfred E. King, book-keeper at B.A. Seaborg's Aberdeen Packing Company cannery, Ilwaco, Washington, to his wife, Annie Warner King, at Locust Farm, Oregon City.

Ilwaco Wednesday night  
(May 20, 1908)

My Dear Annie,

This has been a great day down here. Ilwaco, (Ft.) Canby & North Head never had such a great crowd of people and (it) may be many years, again, before such a crowd will assemble. At 5:30 a.m., the steamers, launches & fishing boats began arriving at Fort Canby and by noon, upwards of 125 crafts of all kinds and descriptions were there.

300 people came on the train at 11 o'clock from Raymond, South Bend & other places. As early as 7 a.m. the people started for North Head, in all kinds of rigs. It looked at North Head like an old fashion Methodist Camp Meeting; all had lunches & they needed them for the fleet did not pass North Head until 1 p.m.

I got out at 10:30 & went up to Kelliher's room & soon saw the ships, coming 4 abreast, 25 miles south of the Head. My but it was a fine sight. (As) soon as they had past Tillamook Rock Light House they swung inshore & were in single file, along in front of Seaside -- and swung again, heading West, until they came in line with the far away Buoy, thence headed North, & came very slow. To see the great 16 big ships painted white, was a sight, we may never see again, on the coast. They kept equal distance between each ship, as good as a regiment marches on shore.

The "Roanoke" & "Alliance" came over from Astoria, loaded with people, & crossing the Bar, lots of them fed the fishes. I had a fine view all the time, from 10:30 to 1:30 p.m. The Flagship and 3 following are certainly ships worthwhile crossing the Continent to see. I don't think it would have made any difference if it had stormed & rained, the people would have stayed just the same. The weather was cold and clear, & when (the) ships arrived commenced to cloud up, but rain held off until last night. All the logging camps, canneries, etc., closed for the day.





Nine ships of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet on the horizon, May 20, 1908.

## **“The Great White Fleet”**



Photo courtesy Rodney K. Williams



It is estimated that there were at Fort Canby & McKenzie Head 1700 and North Head were 2000. I got back at 2 p.m. & saw 35 fishing boats, with their new white sails, start for Astoria, some having as high as 20 people in them. It was like a 4th of July race, in older times in Ilwaco.

Ma Stout was there in all her glory. Mr. & Mrs. Kelliher & Rees Williams start for Seattle tomorrow to see the fleet.

Fish are still coming very light. Making cans all the time. Lots of love to you all.

From Dada



Oregon Historical Society photo OrHi 11847, used with permission

Long Beach Peninsula crowds watch for the arrival of the Great White Fleet from the bluff at North Head Light, May 20, 1908.

Editor's note: Local newspapers took notice of the Fleet, before and after its arrival off the Northwest coast. The following article appeared on page one of the Aberdeen Daily Bulletin for Tuesday, May 19, 1908:

## Wireless Working to Greet Battleships

Aerograms Will Be Exchanged with Admiral Sperry

**"Admiral" George Wolff Will Tell Admiral Sperry of the Teddy Bears By  
Wireless Tomorrow Evening, Sure.**

The United Wireless Telegraph Company announces that the stations here and at Westport are ready, according to promise, to report the movements of the fleet, the station here being dependent upon the Electric Company for current. This station ... was in communication with Astoria and the steamer **Watson** off Cape Flattery bound north. The Westport station was finished Sunday, and readily communicated with all the wireless stations from San Diego on the south to Sitka, Alaska, on the north. Last night the Westport station reported to this station that the fleet was off Point Reyes, Cal., steaming slowly north.

This afternoon, as soon as the Electric Company can supply this station with current, aerograms will be posted on bulletin boards over George Wolff's store and will continue all day tomorrow...When the fleet passes the Columbia River a flag will be unfurled from the peak of the wireless mast at K and Wishkah Streets and will be gradually lowered as the fleet passes the mouth of this Harbor. A flag will also fly from the masthead at Westport. Aerograms will be flashed to Admiral Sperry tomorrow as the fleet approaches, from the mayors of Aberdeen and Hoquiam, as well as from the president of the Chamber of Commerce of this city, extending greetings and congratulations from the cities of this Harbor.

An aerogram will also be sent by George Wolff to the admiral expressing the desire of this city to present to the fleet 16 Teddy bears as a mascot for each ship, to be delivered when the fleet arrives at Seattle, as the fleet is not permitted to stop under sail..."

(Editorial Aside: The origin of the "Teddy Bear", mentioned in the foregoing newspaper article, is explained in an article from the Washington Post (undated):

On Nov. 14, 1902, president and First Huntsman Teddy Roosevelt took to the woods in the midst of border negotiations between Louisiana and Mississippi. He is said to have spotted a black bear cub but refused to shoot it, announcing that he "drew the line". The moment was captured in a Clifford K. Berryman cartoon, which ran on The Post's front page. Within months, two Brooklyn shopkeepers, proprietors of the Ideal Novelty and Toy Co., had transformed a political symbol into a commercial extravaganza."...And the Teddy Bear became a part of our culture.

The **Chinook Observer** of May 22, 1908 (George Hibbert, Editor), ran the following account:

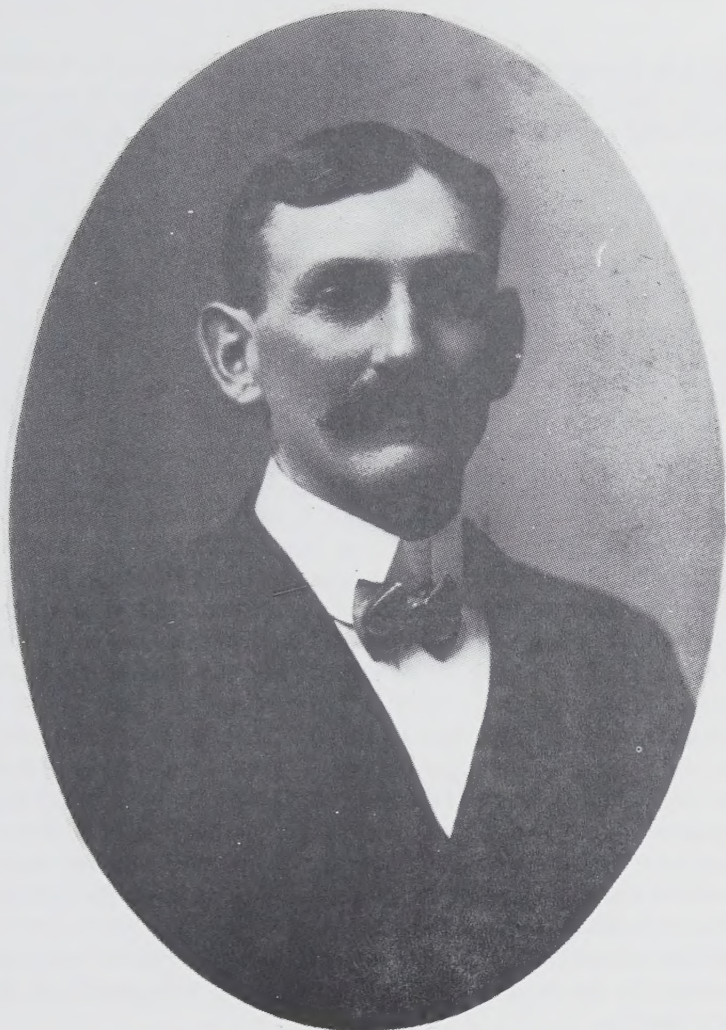
Wednesday was a fair day, and being the day on which the Atlantic fleet was to pass north in front of the mouth of the Columbia on its way to Puget Sound, Chinook was nearly depopulated from early morning till 3:30 p.m. All the fish launches



belonging to the Baker's Bay trappers were donated by their owners to any and all the people of Chinook for a free trip to Fort Canby, to give the privilege of witnessing the most imposing naval procession that ever appeared in the North Pacific. The result was that all who could spare the time accepted the invitation and there was a string of launches on the way to Canby from 5 til 8 a.m. Some went down in wagons. The dock at Ft. Canby was crowded with all kinds of boats, from the largest of the lower river steamers to the smallest sailboat, many of them in gala attire. Before 12 p.m. the Fort Canby light hill, McKenzie and North heads were black with people from both sides of the river armed with field glasses and lunch baskets, awaiting the appearance of the fleet. About 10 o'clock it could be seen far below Tillamook Rock, in a cloud of smoke, and later about 12 o'clock it swung in toward Clatsop Beach, at Seaside, where the spectators must have had a splendid view of it. It came out single file along Clatsop Spit and was plainly visible through the glasses, 16 white warships being in line. At the mouth of the Columbia it slowed down and everybody on the hills had as good a view of it as the distance would permit, which was probably seven miles. The parade of ships was tame, but the crowd that attended was interesting, and the departure of the mosquito fleet for home, leaving Ft. Canby, with all kinds of water craft loaded with people was the prettiest and liveliest sight of the day. The Chinookers arrived home about 3:30 p.m.



A cartoon from the "teddy-bear" era.



## **J.A. Morehead of Nahcotta**

by Dorothy Williams

**Editor's note:** We are pleased to reprint here an excerpt from a family history written by Dorothy Trondsen Williams (Mrs. John G. Williams) from "THEY REMEMBERED III," by Charlotte and Edgar Davis. J.A. Morehead's service to Pacific County as a Commissioner, and his donation of land for public use, among his many other contributions to the area, set him apart among the Peninsula's outstanding pioneers.

John Alvin Morehead arrived over land instead of by sea. His parents were from Virginia but were in Ohio on March 31, 1859, when John was born. They later moved to Battle Creek, Michigan, where his father ran a sawmill. This gave John the experience to come to Oregon in 1881 and work in a sawmill in Yamhill County. He also taught school in Hopewell for a short time. In 1882 he came to Pacific County to work for L.A. Loomis on the stage line. He drove the stage from 1882 to 1885, and has written graphically of those days: "the stage drivers were required to be up



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at 2:00 o'clock in the morning, so as to feed, curry and harness the horses and drive out to the oyster beds to get the load of oysters, so as to be able to leave the hotel at 4:00 a.m. The stage drivers were supposed to put in 16 hours a day but frequently worked longer."

1885 was an event-filled year as he married the Oysterville postmistress, Lizzie Brown, and with the backing of L.A. Loomis, he entered the store business. In addition, he served as Oysterville postmaster for the next 4 years. In 1889 he moved his interests to Nahcotta. He and Lizzie built a home -- the blue one across from the present shellfish laboratory -- and a store on the south side of the new railroad. Businesses to the north of the tracks were touting this area as Sealand, but eventually the Nahcotta interests south of the tracks prevailed, and Nahcotta became Nahcotta, the selection of the name having been strongly influenced by Mr. Morehead.

John Morehead ran this store for 26 years. The **South Bend Journal** in 1900 describes the business, in part: "they now have customers at every station on the line of the railroad and so large did their trade at Ocean Park become that in 1895 they built a handsome branch store which is managed by E.J. Sprague". In that same article, it goes on to mention "He (Morehead) bears the distinction of having been elected County Commissioner on the Democratic ticket in a county which is overwhelmingly Republican." During his lifetime he was Pacific County Commissioner for a total of 14 years.

His interests were many. He was a president of the Pacific County Pioneer Association, and was one of the organizers of the Pacific State Bank in South Bend. He raised cattle, and grew peas and daffodil bulbs -- in the springtime, one can still find a few plants growing on the hill west of the old Morehead barn in Nahcotta --and perhaps most important to his later years, he bought property, part of which became Morehead Park and Camp Morehead (on Willapa Bay). He also donated the right of way for the Port of Peninsula.

John and Lizzie had three children: Enola, Bess and John, who grew up in Nahcotta hunting for arrow points and playing with the Wiegardts and the children of other early families.

In his later years, J.A. Morehead's greatest interest was presenting and keeping Morehead Park and Camp Morehead available to the public. Sunday in the summer meant swimming and a picnic at Morehead Park. Here on the grounds J.A. Morehead had constructed tables, cooking areas, and a bathhouse. There were also unique items like the boiler from the first sawmill west of the Rockies, and William Begg's figurehead from the wrecked bark **GLEN MORAG**. The entrance was topped by an Indian canoe. Laurels were planted among the spruce, salal and huckleberries, and no one remembers that it ever rained. Camp Morehead, to the north, was constructed for use by youthful organizations such as the Boy Scouts, 4-H and Campfire Girls. Six or seven cabins were nestled under the trees and a cook house and mess hall were used by hundreds of children from the southwestern part of the state. Food tasted better and the stars were always closer around a bonfire on the beach at Camp Morehead.

In 1938 J.A. Morehead died of a stroke which occurred while he was sitting in his car in the driveway of Morehead Park. Hopefully he was enjoying his endeavor right up to the end.



## Cypress Trees at Nahcotta

(Willapa Harbor Pilot, South Bend, March 30, 1927)



J.G. Mann photo

### Morehead Cypress Trees

J.A. Morehead of Nahcotta is doing quite a little work on the improvement of the camp ground on the bay, mainly by transplanting of trees. The spruce aphids are very serious again this year and from all indications will eventually kill out the spruce trees, which are native to the camp ground as well as other places on the Peninsula.

Mr. Morehead is looking around for trees which can be planted at this time to take the place of spruce. One of the trees in which he is deeply interested is the Monterey cypress, which seems to be entirely immune to the aphids' attack, as well as the bruising of cattle.

There are several trees of this variety (cypress) on the Peninsula, which were planted several years ago and that have made a splendid growth under conditions especially at Nahcotta and Oysterville. These trees have produced an excellent growth and are very suitable for windbreak and are really a beautiful tree as they become older.

No northwest source of this tree is known and steps have been taken to see whether it will be possible to secure this tree from California, where it is native in small sections along the coast around Monterey Bay.

Mr. Morehead is showing considerable foresight in his plantings and aims to plant trees which will grow in good shape as the others are killed out, so that at no time will the camp site be bare of trees. Mr. Morehead is certainly to be commended in his public spirit in this work.

(Willapa Harbor Pilot, South Bend. May 4, 1927)

J.A. Morehead of Nahcotta in looking ahead several years to the time when many, if not all of the spruce on his camp site will have been destroyed by the spruce aphids, recently purchased from the California Nursery Company 100 Monterey cypress to be transplanted on to these camp grounds.

The trees were shipped in a flat, apparently that in which they had been grown, the flat being about 2 x 3 feet. The trees were thrifty looking trees of about 10 to 12 inches tall and look as though they would transplant well.

The Monterey cypress seems to do exceptionally well on the Peninsula and makes an exceptionally good tree for wind break planting. These trees can be seen on the bay side of the road as one enters Nahcotta and a number of others are growing in Oysterville . . .

(Editor's note: A row of the Morehead cypresses still stands north of the entrance to Camp Morehead, in Nahcotta.)





The Astoria - Megler Bridge celebrates 25 years.